



HRO-13-09
15 September 2013

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Technician Personnel

Technician Branch Staff:

Technician Branch Manager	MAJ Edwin Davis	x8414
Classification/Manpower	SMSgt Deb Burling	x8187
	2LT Jessica Pan	x8182
Recruitment, Staffing & Pay Benefits & Services	Ms. Denise Anderson	x8177
	Ms. Deb Tankesley	x8173
	MSgt Jody Kouma	x8190
	SPC Amanda Almanza	x8197
	Ms. Diane Voichoski	x8184
Technician Training /Travel	SGT Michelle Berry	x8185

HRO website: <http://ne.ng.mil/ArmyGuard/Pages/TechnicianBranch.aspx>

Farewell from HRO: SFC Braun is moving from the Human Resources Office for another position as the Victim Advocate Coordinator. We wish her well with her future endeavors.

Federal Length of Service Awards (SEP):

Technicians become eligible for recognition when they complete ten (10) years of creditable Federal service. Creditable service includes all service used in establishing the technician's leave service computation date which includes active duty military and temporary federal employment. This award is presented in five (5) year increments.

10 Years:	Jeffrey M. Chmura (ANG) Curtis L. Abendroth (ARNG) Eugene E. Fuehrer (ARNG) Christopher W. Martin (ARNG)
15 Years:	Marcus A. Groetzinger (ARNG) Steven Collins (ARNG) Fredrick W. Oltrogge (ANG) Bradley J. Freeman (ANG)
20 Years:	Stephen J. Stanislav (ARNG)
30 Years:	Breck A. Shilling (ANG) Michael T. Sabatka (ANG)

Federal Employee Retirements:

John Buhrmann (ANG) – 13 Sep

Use or Lose Annual Leave:

Employees may carry over to the next leave year a maximum amount of accrued annual leave (240 hours). Employees must "use" their excess annual leave by the end of a leave year or they will "lose" (forfeit) it. For leave year 2013 the leave year began 12 Jan 13 and will end 11 Jan 14.

An agency may consider restoring annual leave that was forfeited if the reason is under one of the following conditions: (1) Exigency of public business. The exigency, or mission demand, must be of such importance as to preclude the use of scheduled leave. The exigency must be approved, normally in advance, through supervisory channels. (2) Sickness, injury or other medical condition for which sick leave is appropriate. (3) Administrative error through no fault of the technician. Regulatory rules require "use or lose" annual leave to be scheduled in writing before the start of the third biweekly pay period prior to the end of the leave year. Military duty is not considered a condition of exigency due to annual leave could be used.

Required in the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) regulations, an employee must schedule annual leave by the third pay period prior to the end of the leave year (30 Nov 2013) to avoid forfeiture of his or her annual leave.

Accomplished at the end of the leave year to ensure all efforts were made to accommodate the technician and missions, documentation required to the HRO for TAG approval is a request for restoration of forfeited annual leave with the OPM 71 with scheduled dates of leave, official approval, statement of reasons for canceling the approved leave, documentation for the beginning and ending dates of the exigency, and calendar dates the canceled leave was rescheduled for use.

Voluntary Leave Transfer Participant

The following employee has been approved to become a leave recipient under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program due to back surgery for removal of disc and fusing the vertebrae:

Brandon J. VanDerslice, WG-10, UTES #2, Mead, NE

Employees who would like to voluntarily donate annual leave may submit their OPM donor forms to the Human Resources Office, ATTN: HRO-Tech Svcs.

An OPM Form 630-A is used when the employee is in the same agency as the donor and an OPM 630-B when in a different agency. Air Guard and Army Guard are considered different agencies.

Forms can be located at the HRO website, Technician Branch under Voluntary Leave
<http://ne.ng.mil/ArmyGuard/Pages/TechnicianBranch.aspx>

Additional information may be obtained by contacting MSgt Jody Kouma X8190 and/or Deb Tankesley, X8173

Affordable Care Act and FEHB

Beginning January 1, 2014, The Affordable Care Act's individual shared responsibility provision requires each individual (including children) to: 1. Maintain minimum essential health coverage (known as "MEC") or, 2. Qualify for an exemption; or 3. Make a payment when filing his or her Federal income tax return.

All FEHB plans are eligible employer-sponsored plans and provide minimum essential coverage (MEC). Therefore, FEHB plans meet the definition of MEC.

FEHB Open Season 2013

Federal Benefits Open Season will be conducted from Monday, November 11th through Monday, December 9th, 2013. New for 2014! The FEDVIP (Dental & Vision) adds three new dental plans and one new vision plan. OPM is continuing the Going Green initiative and therefore FEHB plan brochures can be found by visiting www.opm.gov/FEHBbrochures. Continuous Open Season info will be forthcoming in the upcoming HRO bulletins and through supervisory channels. Any pertinent or specific questions, please contact us!

Do I have Veteran's Preference?

Employees within the National Guard in a Dual and Non -Dual Status are employed as excepted service Title 32 USC 709. Due to the unique nature of the National Guard technician program, veteran's preference is not granted to anyone applying for a National Guard Title 32 position.

You may receive veteran's preference for other federal agencies depending on dates of active duty service, receipt of a campaign badge, Purple Heart, or a service-connected disability. See <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/vetpref/index.aspx> for more information.

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Technician Travel & Training

Substantiating Records - ARNG:

Please upload your Letter of Instruction (LOI)/Memorandum of Instruction (MOI) to the Substantiating Records area in your DTS authorization.

Fiscal Law Course training certificates: This is a reminder to keep your Fiscal Law Course completion certificates. Not all Fiscal Law Course attendance is recorded in ATRRS so it is critical that you maintain your own records of training completion.

Changing return airline flights while TDY: If you are looking for an earlier flight home because your course is ending earlier than planned, be sure to ask the CTO if the new flight is more expensive than the original, previously-approved flight. Know that you may not be reimbursed for additional airline costs if there is no corresponding cost savings in hotel or other travel-related costs.

Local Lincoln, NE Training opportunity for Finance Community:

Nebraska is hosting an Enhanced Defense Financial Management Training (EDFMT) course 18-22 November 2012 in the JFHQ Fourth Floor Conference Room. This 40-hour course is designed to introduce participants to a spectrum of financial management topics, including DoD (rather than Service-specific) financial management policies and procedures. This course also provides most of the necessary tools to prepare students to take the Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM) examinations.

Those in program manager, budget analyst, management analyst, resource advisor and other finance-related positions should consider attending this training. Those who want to take the EDFMT course for self-development purposes and do not want to take the exam are equally welcome to attend.

Students apply at <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/edfmt/>.

POC for class information is LtCol Mary McGahan, 402 309 8262, mary.a.mcgahan.mil@mail.mil.

POC for registration is Ms Diane Voichoski, 402 309 8184, diane.s.voichoski.civ@mail.mil

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Human Resources Information Systems (HRSIS)

HRSIS Staff

SMSgt Mike Courtney – HRSIS Manager – x8189

SGT Michelle Berry – HR Assistant – x8185

My Workplace and PAA

If you are a new Supervisor of Technicians and don't see a My Workplace link on the DCPDS Portal page, please contact SMSgt Courtney or SGT Berry. We will check to ensure you are coded correctly in the system. This new responsibility takes a couple of days to appear once you are coded as a supervisor in DCPDS, so your patience is appreciated.

PAA – (Performance Appraisal Application): if you are a new supervisor of Technicians, please check to ensure you can see all of the Technician employees you supervise within My Workplace. If you don't see those you need or see other Technicians, please contact us and we will help sort it out for you.

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State Personnel

HRO-SP Staff

HR Manager	Ms. Kari Foote	x8172
HR Assistant/Benefits	Mr. Tim Diedrichsen	x8180
HR Assistant/Payroll	Ms. Jessie Bockelman	x8178

Leave of Absence Notification

All employees should notify the Human Resources Office if they are going to be in a leave without pay status, for one entire pay period or more, for any reason. Please notify Human Resources at least two (2) weeks in advance or as soon as possible so insurance deductions may be adjusted and any necessary actions can be taken care of in our Employee Work Center system. A delay in notification may cause premium deductions to come out of your pay unnecessarily or insurance coverages to lapse due to non-payment of premiums.

Wellness Plan Requirements Checklist

Do you have questions on whether or not you've completed all the steps that will allow you to continue in the Wellness medical insurance plan? Employees should view the steps that Health Fitness has recorded as being complete. Visit their website at www.wellnessoptions.nebraska.gov. Health Fitness has a Wellness Checklist which shows the steps that need to be completed. A checkmark will appear on the completed steps. Please click on the "Completed Criteria Activity" and "Learn more" links to review detailed information on the Wellness plan qualifications and take action.

If you are a new employee and have signed up for the Wellness PPO plan, you will need to go to the site and click on the "New Visitors Click Here!" link and follow the instructions to create a password. New employees (and enrolled spouses) need to complete the online Health Assessment within about two weeks of receiving a notification letter from Health Fitness. Employees (and enrolled spouses) should receive these letters about 3 to 4 weeks after the effective date of any insurance elections. As an example, a new employee (and an enrolled spouse) who has insurance starting on September 1st will receive their letter around the last week of September. The employee (and enrolled spouse) will need to complete their Health Assessment(s) by the date noted in the letter. When logged into the Health Fitness website, look under the "My Assessments" link that appears in the menu bar along the left side of the screen to get started on completing your Health Assessment.

Note: To log into the Health Fitness website you will need your employee number. You will enter your employee number into the User Name field. You need to enter eight digits so if your employee number is less than that you will need to enter leading zeros to make it eight digits.

End of Year Vacation Balances

We have many State employees who could lose vacation leave this year if they do not take action now to schedule and use leave prior to December 31. Accrued leave in excess of 35 work days (280 hours) cannot be carried over into the new calendar year (The limit for Firefighters is 392 hours). Classified System Personnel Rules and the NAPE/AFSCME Labor Contract establish that employees who have accumulated vacation in excess of thirty-five days shall forfeit the excess amount on December 31 of each calendar year.

We suggest that you plan the use of your annual leave well in advance. Review your vacation dates in advance with your supervisor. This will allow management to plan coverage of your responsibilities in your absence. Planning for the use of leave is critical so that employees do not finish the year forfeiting excess leave.

Address and Direct Deposit Changes

Employees can now change their addresses and direct deposit information in the Employee Work Center (EWC). Go to the LINK website, www.link.ne.gov to get to the EWC. After you log in, click on the 'All About Me' link at the top of the screen and then on the next screen click on the 'Personal' icon. Next click on 'Contact Information', under the word Change. After clicking on 'Change' you will want to click on a blue 'Edit' button that should be just under your name in the upper left-hand corner of the screen.

To change direct deposit information, employees can follow the instructions on the LINK site. Go to User Guides under Help (at the bottom of the screen). In the User Guide screen go to the 'New Hire Process' section and look for 'Direct Deposit: Add, Edit, or Delete – Employee Self Service (10/29/12)'.

If you want expense reimbursements to go to a different account than you currently have on file you will need to let the HR office know that account information. If you have any doubt about what account information is currently on file please contact the HR office.

Note: You must have account information in the system for expense reimbursements.

AGR Personnel

Army and Air:

The AGR Office Staff:

MAJ Ed Davis, AGR Manager (402) 309-8171

SFC Jacob Widhalm, Human Resources Assistant, (402) 309-8186

- Army Staffing- vacancy announcements, SF 52
- Mob Aug/ADOS packet review
- Initial Tour Continuation Boards
- Air Vacancy Announcements, SF 52
- FTSMCS Leave Administrator

SFC Roger Ramos, Personnel Sergeant, (402) 309-8183

- Army Separations and Retirements
- AGR Travel (DTS)
- AGR Mobilizations
- AGR PCS Manager
- Career Status Bonus Manager

SSG Amber Engelman, Personnel Services Sergeant, (402) 309-8181

- Air staffing and AROWS Orders
- FTE Orders and Tracking
- Army Appointment and Reassignments
- AGR Pay and Entitlement Issues
- Air AGR Appointments and Reassignments
- Good Conduct Medals
- Air Occasional AGRs

UnitedHealthcare: Effective 1 April 2013, health coverage switched from Triwest to UnitedHealthcare. To see a list of available PCM's, go to <https://www.uhcmilitarywest.com/>. To qualify for Tricare benefits, service members must ensure DEERS is up to date (dependents and active duty tours). Maintaining current CAC keeps DEERS enrollment and ensures medical and dental benefits are not interrupted. POC is SSG Garrett, (402) 309-1541.

Active Duty Dental Program: Effective 1 August 2009, the Active Duty Dental Program insurance is United Concordia. United Concordia was awarded the contract to oversee ALL Active Duty Dental Services. Your care no longer goes through MMSO, but rather, DIRECTLY through UCCI Dental. The website: www.addp-ucci.com further explains how to utilize the program. POC is SSG Garrett, (402) 309-1541.

TriCare Dental Program: MetLife's contract to administer the TDP began 1 May 2012. Until that time claims should be processed through United Concordia as they have in the past. Providers should be sent information, by MetLife, as to what will they will need to do to file claims during the transition. As with United Concordia, the filing of claims is the network provider's responsibility, not the SMs.

The transition to MetLife will only affect Traditional SMs, family members and AGR family members enrolled in the TRICARE Dental Program. SMs (AGRs) in the Active Duty Dental Program (ADDP) will not be affected as United Concordia will continue to administer the ADDP.

The State Medical Benefits Officer is SSG Travis Garrett and can be reached at 402-309-1541 or travis.s.garrett.mil@mail.mil for further questions and information.

Transition Assistance Advisor: If you are planning to retire or resign from the AGR program, contact Bonnie Bessler at (402) 309-1543, bonnie.bessler@us.army.mil. Bonnie serves as our Transition Assistance Advisor and provides vital assistance and guidance on future VA benefits, programs and medical claims you may qualify for. This service is open to ALL military personnel regardless of branch of service, active or reserve.

Leave Carryover: The 75 Day Leave Carryover is extended to 30 September 2015. Visit the following web site for more information: https://ngnec2-moss1/Directorates/J1/AGR%20Branch/Leave/ALARACT_022_2013_ANNOUNCEMENT%20OF%20EXTENSION%20OF%20THE%2075%20DAY%20LEAVE%20CARRY%20OVER%20THROUGH%2030%20SEPTEMBER%202015.pdf

Paternity Leave: The policy concerning Paternity Leave is: <http://ngne-j6noc-nma7/Directorates/J1/AGR%20Branch/Leave/Paternity%20Leave%20Policy.pdf>

Child Care Fee Assistance: The Childcare Subsidy Benefit Program: Used to assist any active duty personnel with childcare costs by providing payments directly to federal childcare centers located throughout the United States. Direct questions on eligibility and application for the subsidy should be addressed to the GSA Heartland Finance Center at (816) 823-4578 or via email: army.childcare@gsa.gov. Childcare providers should contact GSA's External Services Division for a complete application package and information regarding participation in The Air Childcare Subsidy Benefit Program.

Extending Benefits to Same-Sex Spouses: On 13 August 2013, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel made the announcement of extending benefits to same-sex spouses of military members. Entitlements such as TRICARE enrollment, basic allowance for housing (BAH) and family separation allowance are retroactive to the date of the Supreme Court's decision. Any claims to entitlements before that date will not be granted. For those members married after June 26, 2013, entitlements begin at the date of marriage. Commanders may grant non-chargeable leave to Service members who are in same-sex relationships and are assigned to duty stations located more than 100 miles from a U.S. state that allows same-sex couples to marry, for travel to a state r jurisdiction that allows same-sex couples to be married. Eligible Service members assigned CONUS may be granted non-chargeable leave for a period of up to 7 days; eligible Service members assigned OCONUS may be granted non-chargeable leave for a period of up to 10 days. Marriage leave may be granted only once during the career of a Service member. For additional information, please see the Nebraska's HRO page on GKO.

Army:

Leave Tracking System – When you move duty positions to another organization, please log into the leave tracking system and go to my account. Once there, scroll down and select the drop down next to change user group to update your organization. This will change your approving officials for your leave requests.

Reassignments: - AGR's need to complete DA 5960's when reassigned to a new duty location. This will and does affect BAH Rates and Soldiers will incur debts from BAH changes.

DTS – All Soldiers need to upload the MOI/LOI into their DTS Authorization request. This includes in-state conferences and training events. Also AGR's need to submit travel requests in a timely manner. Do not wait until the last minute to submit when there are multiple levels of review/approval to include CTO. It is the Soldiers responsibility to make contact with Carlson Travel and ensure their flights/entitlements are reserved and contracted. Battalions and MSC's need to ensure GSA/NTV's are utilized.

Pay and Entitlement Documents – The following documents are required to be sent thru HRO for processing on all AGRs: Promotion orders, special pay orders, allotments, CSB Redux, DA Form 5960 (BAH), SF 1199, W4, DA 4187 (Selling leave, meal collection, confinement and sick-in-hospital for more than one day), DA Form 4836 Extensions.

ADOS/Mob Augmentee – All Soldiers coming on ADOS tours greater than 30 days need to in-process with SSG Engelman. Call to set up an appointment. Females need to have a pregnancy test completed with Med Det no sooner than 15 days prior to the start date of orders.

Meal collection via 4187 – If you are attending a School or Annual Training where meals are available, you need to complete a DD 1475 collecting your BAS for the period that meals were available. The DD 1475 needs to be sent to HRO and we will send to pay for processing.

OCONUS – If you are going OCONUS, please let HRO know ASAP so we complete the OCONUS orders process. We need to know about your travel OCONUS NLT two weeks before traveling.

PCS – If you are completing a PCS move, you will need to coordinate with HRO and the Offutt TMO to complete this process.

DD 214 – These need to be electronically signed. You must coordinate with HRO to complete this with SFC Ramos.

BAH for Deployed Soldiers: Effective 3 April 2013, when an AGR is mobilized for active duty other than AGR duty without a break in service, the member's BAH/OHA is based on the PDS and rate protected. The change requires Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) to remain at the Permanent Duty Station (PDS) rate when a Soldier transitions from Active Guard Reserve (AGR) to active duty, without a break in service. AGR Soldiers mobilized prior to 3 April 2013 and receiving BAH/OHA based on primary residence will continue to receive this rate until they transition back to AGR duty.

Air:

AGR Dental Updates in DDS Web: Message from Cynthia M. Anderson Adams, MSgt, USAF, Individual Medical Readiness Program Manager, NGB/SGPR Office of the Air Surgeon. POC is LtCol Mary Mild, (402) 309-1496.

I have been getting several phone calls and e-mails in regards to the AGR's civilian exams being updated into DDS Web. The AGR's at remote bases (ANG members living outside of the 50 mile catchment area of an AD MTF/DTF) should be bringing in an SF 603 from their civilian dentist (AFI 47-101, 5.4.1.2) and this is considered a military exam through their ADDP (Active Duty Dental Plan) provider. So, even though they are seeing a civilian dentist, it is considered their Military Dental Exam.

AGR's are entitled to benefits that include care and treatment that we should be monitoring and have a complete medical and dental chart on all AGR members ensuring that they are deployable. Also, I know the AFI states to give a member the SF 603 prior to them going to see their civilian dentist, but we know that our members go directly to see their providers and let us know once they return. Please have your members get a copy of the dental treatment for each visit from their providers and either fax, e-mail, or hand walk into your clinics. This way, your dental clinic will have a complete dental record on all of your AGR members.

Cynthia M. Anderson Adams, MSgt, USAF, Individual Medical Readiness Program Manager
NGB/SGPR Office of the Air Surgeon 3500 Fetchet Ave Andrews AFB, MD. 20762
DSN: 278-8567, COMM: 301 836-8567, cynthia.adams@ang.af.mil

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[Equal Employment Office/Diversity/Organizational Development](#)

(Point of contact for the following information is LaVonne Rosenthal, 309-8111.)

Contact information for all Employee Assistance Programs

1. In order to accomplish our mission and serve the people of our great state and nation, we must maintain high levels of productivity and morale. The mental and physical health of the workforce is critical to our success. The Military Department has three different employee assistance programs to meet the needs of our full-time State, AGR and Technician employees and their immediate family members. These services are provided at no charge to the employees. Counselors from each of the providers follow federal law and regulations which strictly prohibit the release of information from personal consultation; confidentiality is strictly upheld.

2. Problems such as alcohol or drug abuse; family, marital status, legal or financial difficulties; job, or other personal stresses can exist for our employees. These situations often manifest themselves in the form of accidents, poor conduct, attendance problems, and decreased quality of work and production. Employees are often reluctant to seek assistance because they feel that their problems are of a personal nature. Oftentimes these personal problems carry over and become employment problems.

3. Nebraska Military Department employees are encouraged to use the employee assistance program whenever they feel that they (or their immediate family members) have problems that require professional help. The following lists the three different providers, which personnel system they serve, and contact information (phone number and web site).

a) Full time State employees: **Deer Oaks EAP**

Phone: 1-866-792-3616

Website: www.deeroaks.com

b) Military technicians, traditional Guard members, AGR: **Military One Source**

Phone: 1-800-342-9647

Website: www.militaryonesource.com

c) Non-dual status technicians: **Federal Occupational Health**

Phone: 1-800-222-0364

Website: www.foh4you.com

4. All providers maintain a 24-hour "800" hotline to provide assistance on a timely basis. If necessary, referrals are made to appropriate care providers.

Please direct any questions to Ms. Rosenthal at 402-309-8111.

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